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ABSTRACT

This is the final 1982-1983 evaluation of Upward Reach, a project in Cleveland's 12 high schools that provides educational, vocational, and behavioral counseling to students who are identified as potential dropouts or who are returned to school from court agencies. Twelve fulltime counselor aides provide students with individual counseling services and with referrals to other appropriate school-community agencies. Additionally, 10th grade students are provided with part-time after school jobs tied directly to attendance and grades. Available data from the 1982-83 school year show that the project delivered the services proposed to the students targeted to receive them. Students' opinions of the project were high, and project treatment did have a positive effect on rates of attendance, although not enough to meet the objective criterion. The number of suspensions increased for the group of first-year project participants, and the high average number of counselor aide contacts had no positive impact on the number of suspensions. (CMG)

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UPWARD REACH

DISADVANTAGED PUPIL PROGRAM FUND

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1982-83
FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

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Cleveland Public Schools

RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS DEPARTMENT

July, 1983

UD 023 174

UPWARD REACH

1982-83 Final Evaluation

PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

The Upward Reach project was implemented in all twelve Cleveland Public High Schools to provide intense support by means of educational, behaviorial and vocational counseling for students who manifest behavior that is indicative of the drop-out prone or who are returned to school from court agencies. Twelve Counselor Aides are assigned to twelve high schools on a full-time basis. These staff provide students with individual counseling services and with referrals to other appropriate school community agencies. Additionally, tenth grade students were provided part-time after school jobs tied directly to attendance and grades. Wages were provided by the project to motivate these students to the benefits of schooling.

SERVICE SUMMARY

Pupils Served: 1,491

Grades Served: 9-12

Years in Operation: 6

Schools: 12 public

(See list, Appendix A)

Staffing:
1 Education Program Manager, FT
1 Consultant Teacher, FT
12 Counselor Aides, FT
1 Clerk, FT

Total DPPF Expenditures*

Per Pupil Cost*

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Project services were delivered as proposed to students identified as drop-out prone or as institutional returnees. Services included counseling in educational and vocational planning, academic and social skill development and community resources. Staff conferred with parents, helped students enroll in special programs and find jobs, and provided liaison services among students, teachers and parole officers.

Two project objectives were achieved, two were not achieved, and two could not be assessed because the data was not retrievable from attendance records or computer files. Student opinions of the project were high and project treatment did have a positive effect on rates of attendance, although the increase in attendance did not meet the objective criterion. The number of suspensions increased for the group of first year project participants and the high average number of counselor aide contacts had no positive impact on the numbers of suspensions. Recommendations for the future included beginning working with students before they leave an institution to return to school and continue to provide the employment program with eligilibility tied to school attendance and grades.

OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

- Objective 1: The sample of Upward Reach students who are receiving treatment for the first year and who are identified as 1) active with juvenile court; 2) institutional returnees; or 3) exhibit drop out prone behavior will increase their rate of attendance by 5% over the previous year.

  - Outcome: Objective 1 is considered not attained. The 1981-82 attendance rates for a group of 422 students who participated in Upward Reach during the 1982-83 school year were examined for comparison with their attendance rates for the 1982-83 school year. The 1981-82 attendance rates for the group of 422 Upward Reach participants was 62%. Attendance rates for a group of 421 of the same students were also examined for the current school year. The 1982-83 attendance rate was 66%, an increase of 4%.

    Table 1 shows a comparison of attendance rates by year and by grade for the same group of Upward Reach students (pre and post treatment) and district-wide students. Attendance rates increased substantially for grades nine through eleven. There is no comparison for grade 12 because there were no twelfth graders in the 1981-82 program that were in attendance during the 1982-83 school year.

    The attendance rate for the group as a whole showed an increase but is still substantially below the district wide attendance rates for the same years.

TABLE 1

Rates of Attendance by Year and by Grade for Upward Reach and District-Wide Students

GRADE	ATTENDANCE RATE			
	Upward Reach		District-Wide	
	1981-82	1982-83	1981-82	1982-83
9	63%	74%	75%	81%
10	60%	64%	64%	71%
11	66%	75%	76%	81%
12		76%	81%	85%
TOTAL	62%	66%	72%	85%

- Objective 2: The number of suspensions for a sample of Upward Reach students who are receiving treatment for the first year will decrease by 25% when compared with the number the previous school year.

    - Outcome: Objective 2 is considered not attained. A list of 476 first year project participants who had regular counselor contact was obtained from the project staff. Of these 476 students, matched 1981-82 records were obtained for 422 students. A total of 272 of these students or 64% received a total of 750 suspensions during 1981-82 prior to project participation. The number of suspensions for a group of 286 of the same 422 students were also examined for the current school year. These 286 students (68%) received a total of 853 suspensions for the 1982-83 school year or a 12% increase. Data indicates that the total number of students receiving suspensions and the number of suspensions incurred by first year project students increased over their previous year suspensions prior to project treatment.

- Objective 3: 50% of the sample of Upward Reach students who are receiving treatment for the first year will decrease 5% their days tardy when compared with the previous year.

- Objective 4: The number of A-7 referrals for a sample of Upward Reach students who are receiving treatment for the first year will decrease 25% when compared with the number for the previous year.

    - Outcome: The number of days tardy (objective 3) for individual students is not kept on a systematic basis by the Department of Attendance or by computer files, therefore this data is not available for determining the outcome of this objective. Also, it is impossible to determine the severity of the student's discipline problems from the number of his/her A-7 referrals, thus the outcome of Objective 4 can not be determined.

- Objective 5: Twelve counselor aides will provide a minimum of 16 contacts per students during the project year.

    - Outcome: Objective 5 is considered attained. An analysis of 178 student questionnaires revealed that the average number of counselor contacts as reported by the students was 27 individual contacts and 14 group contacts.

      Additionally, project records submitted by the Upward Reach staff document the following services (See Appendix B for statistical summary of services):

- 1,491 students were identified/counseled
- 6,990 parent contacts were made which included home visits and 6,079 telephone calls

The following types and numbers of counseling sessions were provided:

- Information/planning - 5,149
- Attitude and behavior support - 8,138
- Skill development - 3,947
- Resource referrals (school and/or community) - 1,652

The following list is a sample of the kinds of assistance provided by counselor aides:

- Conferences with parole officers
- Contacts with teachers concerning grades, attendance and attitude
- Assistance with enrollment in work-study projects and special school programs
- Job assistance

- Objective 6: A locally developed questionnaire will document that 75% of a sample of students maintaining regular counselor aide contact will indicate satisfaction with their Upward Reach experience.

  - Outcome: Objective 6 is considered attained. Results of questionnaire responses gathered from 178 Upward Reach students document that 94% of the students indicated a positive response to their experience with the Upward Reach project, for the 1982-83 school year. (See Appendix C for summary of questionnaire responses).

    - Fifty-three percent (53%) of the responding students reported that the best thing they liked about the project was the help and advice they received from an understanding staff.

    - When asked how the project could be improved, 23% of the students responded "more jobs", longer working hours and higher pay".

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

- Ninety-six percent (96%) of the students reported that the Upward Reach counselors have generally been available to them when they needed them.

- Thirty-seven percent (37%) of the students reported that the biggest problem affecting their success in school this year was attendance and class cutting.

- A total of 199 students participated in the jobs component.

CONCLUSIONS

The available data indicate that the Upward Reach project delivered the services proposed to the students targeted to receive them. These services consisted primarily of supportive and information counseling, liaison services between students, teachers, parole officers, community agencies, etc., and assistance with employment and school work. Student evaluations of the services provided were quite positive. Unfortunately, the delivery of these services appeared to have little effect on the target students' attendance rates or rates of disciplinary referral.

Assessment of project impact is made difficult, however, by the fact that there is no comparison group of students available against which to measure the change in behavior of the target students.

The evaluation showed that the project achieved two if its six objectives. Two objectives were not achieved and two were not assessed due to difficulties in obtaining the data.

Based on the observations of the project manager and evaluator, the following recommendations are made:

- Project staff should begin working with the students before they are released from institutions to facilitate their transition back into the school environment and to begin planning their educational program.

- The employment component should continue to be provided since survey results indicate again this project year that the most frequent reason for having school problems was attendance and the most frequently cited service that Upward Reach could provide would be to help students find jobs.

- A full-time staff liaison person should continue to be provided in each school to work with instructional returnees and students active with the Juvenile Court.

APPENDIX A

SCHOOLS SERVED

Senior Highs

Collinwood
East High
East Technical
Glenville
James F. Rhodes
Jane Addams
John Adams
John Hay
John F. Kennedy
John Marshall
Lincoln West
South
West Technical

APPENDIX B

UPWARD REACH PROJECT
FINAL REPORT 1982-83
SERVICES TO STUDENTS

SCHOOL	COLLINWOOD	EAST	EAST TECH	GLENVILLE	JOHN ADAMS	JOHN HAY	J. KENNEDY	J. MARSHALL	LINCOLN-WEST	J. F. RHODES	SOUTH	WEST TECH	NUMBER OF SERVICES PERFORMED FOR STUDENTS.
PARENT CONTACT													
VISITS	41	93	189	87	43	22	15	46	101	61	141	72	
TELEPHONE	54	643	1,603	509	170	83	30	468	221	97	1,201	1,000	
HOME VISITS	0	9	0	9	2	11	0	2	7	3	6	46	
COUNSELING													
A	178	671	858	165	983	529	120	151	191	318	583	402	
B	1,486	592	783	475	1,370	705	108	247	366	343	894	769	
C	1,202	457	517	637	38	36	40	82	213	322	282	121	
D	147	227	364	176	9	86	0	388	170	0	85		
OTHER DPPF													
A	88	41	320	78	18	2	6	13	41	78	362	306	
B	25	122	78	358	101	38	25	30	92	107	4	156	
C	45	175	111	20	28	23	63	7	88	47	188	121	
D	445	0	49	3	27	10	10	110	44	153	15	51	
PUBLIC AGENCIES													
1.	76	28	332	110	87	10	10	299	30	177	137	206	
2.	34	17	23	49	6	3	6	237	25	33	21	150	
3.	82	164	636	221	218	133	5	432	131	410	218	259	
4.	11	19	14	40	39	6	13	64	1	1	0	103	
5.	91	35	44	26	54	22	5	86	48	4	57	82	
6.	7	23	73	0	21	0	0	198	19	19	93	83	
7.	19	0	53	25	30	0	0	0	42	71	36	163	
8.													

APPENDIX C

Cleveland Public Schools

UPWARD REACH PROJECT

Student Questionnaire

SCHOOL _____

COUNSELOR AIDE _____

Dear Upward Reach Student:

The Upward Reach Project has been designed to assist you with school problems, attendance, tardiness, or susupension. Upward Reach is intended to help you and is only useful if you, the student, are satisfied. Please answer each of the questions so that we may know how well we are serving you. Please do not sign this questionnaire.

N= 170 1. During this past school year, about how many times has your UPWARD REACH counselor aide been in contact with you?

Individually 27 (avg.) In a group 14 (avg.)

N= 175 2. Have the UPWARD REACH counselors generally been available when you need them?

Yes 96% No 4%

N= 176 3. Have you in general,been satisfied with your UPWARD REACH experience this year?

Yes 94% No 6%

How have you been satisfied?

o Help received in understanding my problems (38%)

o Staff always available when needed (18%)

0 Someone to talk to (15%)

N= 156 4. Describe the one problem that most affected your success in school this year.

Attendance - 19%	Grades - 12%
Class Cutting - 18%	Friends - 5%
Tardiness - 13%	Teachers - 5%

N= 173 5. Which services can the UPWARD REACH PROJECT provide that will help you in school? You may check more than one.

80% Help getting and keeping a job

44% Tutoring in school subjects

51% Counseling

(Please turn page over)

21% ☐ Getting help from community programs

19% ☐ Help getting into weekend education programs

33% ☐ Help getting into vocational programs

4% ☐ Help finding doctors or dentists

39% ☐ Help with Juvenile Court

☐ Other Help with improving attendance

N= 153 6. What did you like best about the UPWARD REACH PROJECT?

To help advice received from an understanding staff - 53%

Getting a job and earning money - 18%

Someone to talk to - 17%

N= 122 7. How could the UPWARD REACH PROJECT be improved?

More jobs, longer working hours and higher pay - 23%

More staff - 21%

An expanded program offering counseling sessions - 14%

Thank you for your time. Please fold, staple and return this questionnaire to your UPWARD REACH Counselor Aide.